

Descent 91

Chapter 91

[Bonus chapter for 600 powerstones... On another, completely unrelated note, I can see the names of everyone who votes and recently ordered a death note from the dark web. I'm not mentioning this for any particular reason, just an interesting tidbit about my life. 😊 ]

Xinghai had always been a proud man.

When he was three years old, he was designated as a Five Star Arms Professional. In the history of the Ascension Empire, barely a thousand people had ever earned such an evaluation.

From that day onward, he was placed under the intensive care of the government with the consent of his parents. He began playing with swiss army knives before his fourth birthday and was already handling guns by the time he was seven.

When he began school, he entered the Royal Blue Education program, starting from Royal Blue Elementary School, entering Royal Blue Middle School, and eventually venturing to Royal Blue Academy.

He received the best education, the best nutrition plans, and the best care and attention one could ask for. He boasted a position in the top 1000 of the Most Eligible Minors list before his 18th birthday, and even after he became 18, he was within the top 10 000 Eligible Bachelors list.

However, after graduating from Royal Blue Academy five years ago, life became boring to him.

His family background wasn't as great as his peers, so he found moving up ranks in the army difficult. The rebels who spent their time trying to take down the Ascension Empire were nothing more than a clown show who could only cause skirmishes once in a while. And, without a high enough rank, he wouldn't be trusted enough to become a part of missions to quell rebellions on the Moon and Mars.

His life stagnated.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Sure, with his potential, all he had to do was wait a few decades for those old fogies to die and he would eventually get his shot. But ' he didn't have such patience.

Before the Metamorphosis began, he had actually been approached by a member of the rebel army. Instead of reporting the incident like he should have, he actually kept it to himself.

What he wanted the most was the thrill. He loved battle and those damned virtual reality pods weren't worth shit to him. How was it the same if his life wasn't on the line? If he couldn't feel his blood boil? If he couldn't feel his opponent's life slipping between his fingers?

He needed more.

If it wasn't for the Descent of the Metamorphosis, he really would have joined the rebel army and stuck it to those bastards who tried to bury his talent like that.

But, it seemed there was a God smiling down at him. Just when he was about to, his ability awakened, then Invalids appeared, and then Zones began to open one after another.

Just like that, his boring life revved back up. He suddenly felt thrill again.

The longer he spent in a world like this, the more he felt that this was the way it should be. When things were too peaceful, things would be too boring. He wasn't one of those hypocrites who thought one needed to struggle to evolve. No ' | PANDA NOVEL

He just wanted to kill.

Just a bit over an hour ago, Xinghai learned of what was going on here. After he was told that Leonel was all alone and was actually carrying a girl on his back, he disdained to participate. This kind of boring hunt, what the hell did it have to do with him?

He could have never imagined that this prey would be so interesting. It made him a bit curious, almost like a cat who found an adorable mouse.

After finding himself a nice tall tower, he picked out his favorite sniper rifle and settled in.

If one knew his personality and saw him now, they would find the scene to be completely out of their expectations. How a man who lived for battle and blood could remain motionless for so long, to the point of not even seeming to breathe, no one would be able to tell.

Yet, this was exactly what Xinghai had done. His right eye remained trained on his scope, the barrel of his rifle as steady as the surface of a calm lake. Even after he saw his prey, his heart beat remained smooth and unhurried. One would never guess that this was a man he had waited over an hour for.

As though his sniper rifle was a part of his body, he pulled the trigger in unison with a deep breath. As he exhaled, the bullet exited the barrel as though on a line and pierced the shoulder of his prey.

BANG! p???

That was when something completely out of Xinghai's expectations happened. The sound of the second bullet didn't come from his gun' but his prey's!

It was impossible. Sniper rifles of the 21st century had a range of about a kilometer at best. However, those of the 25th could shoot from ten kilometers away. Not only were they equipped with far stronger bullets, but they also came with an on board AI capable of executing the calculations a sniper needed with much more ease than a human.

Due to the size of the inner city and the situation, Xinghai hadn't found it necessary to be so far away. So, he picked a tower just a kilometer and a half away from where he guessed Leonel would appear.

With the power of his sniper rifle and at such a short distance, Leonel could have died on his first shot. But, wanting to play around a bit, Xinghai aimed for Leonel's shoulder first. He wanted to see his prey squirm and struggle for life, maybe even beg for mercy.

PANDA-NOVEL But, who knew that his prey would actually be able to react to a small extent. Like that, the bullet that should have been powerful enough to blow his arm off was actually obstructed by the tactical armor, causing it to lose some momentum and only pierce into his arm instead.

And, as if that wasn't shocking enough, without the slightest hesitation, his prey turned toward his direction as though their gazes could meet across the impossibly long distance and fired a single bullet.

Xinghai could feel it. That bullet radiated and dripped with confidence. He didn't fire a second and didn't even wait for it to land. His prey turned and sprinted into the park, disappearing into the depths of the small forest.

Danger overwhelmed Xinghai's senses. It was impossible, but he knew what would happen. This bullet would hit him. He was as good as dead.

What a funny joke this was. If someone told him that someone could aim an ordinary rifle with a single arm and accurately shoot down a target over a kilometer away, with how sadistic Xinghai was, he might just cut the person to pieces with his favorite swiss army knife.

But here it was, happening before him now.

The bullet tore through the air, invisible in the night sky. Sometimes, it would catch the moonlight's rays and glisten a beautiful silver before disappearing once more as though entering the void.

SSSHHHUUUUUU

The bullet tore into the tower.

In the last moment, Xinghai blinked away, disappearing and appearing one meter to his left.

BANG!

Silence fell. The only thing that could be heard in the high tower now were Xinghai's ragged breaths. He didn't even react when he felt violent bits of shrapnel, coming from his sniper rifle, assaulting him and tearing into his flesh.

After a long while, Xinghai stood, completely naked. If others were here, they would see his military uniform and gear laid on the floor where he had been lying just a moment ago, burnt to a crisp. As for his sniper rifle, it was in pieces.

Slowly, Xinghai made his way to the remains of the barrel. It had split apart as though an explosion had gone off inside of it.

It took a while, but Xinghai finally understood. The instant he shot his prey, he had given him everything he needed to know about his location. In the blink of an eye, his prey took that information and fired back. The shot was so precise that the bullet even entered the very nozzle the original bullet came from, almost taking Xinghai's life.

At this moment, Xinghai was in a sorry state. Bits of shrapnel had torn into the right side of his body. Luckily, he had timed his blink just right so that the brunt of the explosion passed him by. But, he was still a bit injured.

Xinghai grinned.

The sight of a man smiling with an entire side of his face dripping in blood was enough to send cold shivers down one's spine. But, it only became more obscene when Xinghai licked his lips like a rabid dog.

This prey. He wanted it.

## Chapter 92

From their own tower, Miles and Simeon watched this happen with flickering expressions.

At first, they thought that Leonel was just flailing about like a headless chicken. They fully expected that the sniper would fire a second time to end his life. But, the second shot they were expecting never came. The only explanation was that Leonel's singular shot was effective in disrupting the sniper or even killed him.

The two looked at each other, the hint of coldness between them obvious.

For Miles, he wanted Leonel and Aina out of the picture so that he could better control the situation of Royal Blue Province. With his father gone to the capital, this was a time for him to establish his authority and gain some power for himself. The sudden appearance of two Variants would make those plans nearly impossible.

Unfortunately, without proper cause, he didn't dare to lay a hand on one Variant, let alone two. But who knew that Leonel would do something as foolish as committing an act of murder? This was like a pie falling from the skies and into his lap.

For Simeon, his goal was even more obvious. The idea that a bastard child of the Brazinger family could now hold such power was impossible for them to accept. As things stood now, he was still the only one aware of Aina's Variant status as only he paid attention to the outside world. The other members of the family and families like them disdained to do such a thing. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

However, if the family found out about Aina's existence and realized he had acted but failed to bring her back, he would suffer some punishment without a doubt.

Unfortunately, the hands of both of them were tied. One had an ability that was useless before Leonel, and the other was nothing without his genetically modified minions. They could only stand and watch as things unfolded' !

\*\*

Though Leonel had escaped into the small forest, he didn't expect it to provide him much cover. In fact, it was highly likely that there was another ambush waiting for him here.

At the end of the day, this wasn't a true forest. It was just a park. How could he expect to find thick vegetation and foliage to hide him in? PANDA NOVEL

Instead of giving this place his hope, Leonel stopped behind the first tree he could.

With Aina's ax being so large, he was confident in its ability to protect the back of their heads and backs. All he had to do was focus on his front. But he had to be quick, there was no telling if other squads could be converging from his back now that his location had been exposed.

Leonel grit his teeth and pulled on the bullet in his shoulder. Due to his movement in the last second, it hadn't penetrated too deeply. He couldn't help but be impressed with the armor of the black tactical gear he was wearing.

He moved his left shoulder around a bit.

'It's painful, but not to the point of being crippling. Let's go.' ρ??∫???????

Leonel dashed forward a cold glint in his eyes.

Those hiding in this small forest never thought that he would stop at the first line of trees, but it also seemed that they were unaware that their spots of ambush were all seen through by him during that moment of rest.

Leonel slipped his rifle into his spatial bracelet and pulled out two handguns. They were all he needed.

Without slowing down even a beat, he raised his arms.

Leonel's hands seemed to have a mind of their own. In one moment, they would be moving faster than a whip, in the next they would be as steady as a statue.

In those moments of steadiness, a single shot would ring through the forest, followed by a slight spark of light and the muffled groans and pained cries of men and women.

Those faint sparks of light sometimes illuminated Leonel's face. Even hidden behind a helmet, one could see the smoothness of his brows and the unforced nature of his closed eyes. If it wasn't for the fact he was moving so quickly, one would think that he was asleep.

Leonel bolted through the forest in a manner of minutes. In his wake, all that was left were corpses and a series of trees with a single bullet hole through their trunks.

Deep breaths fogged the inside of Leonel's helmet as he sprinted across the edge of the park. He was almost there. The city square and the final line of defense would soon be before him.

'How do I get past this'!?''

As his mind was running wild, Leonel took out a second tactical helmet and slid it over Aina's head. That sniper from before scared him a bit. He thought that Aina would be safe on his back, but that bullet caught him completely off guard. There was no telling just how many snipers of that caliber there were, and he was about to enter an open field once again.

He caught a faint glimpse of Aina's sleeping face. Her cheek rested on his shoulder and her breathing was steady. She looked like a peaceful little fairy.

Leonel couldn't help but smile. For a moment, the fatigue in his limbs completely vanished. He really was a lovestruck fool.

PANDA-NOVEL After he secured the helmet on her head, his eyes became emotionless once more and then tipped over and became cold. It was fine if they all just got out of the way. If that was the case, he could let them be. But if they wanted to play a role in his Aina becoming a prisoner, they would have to pay the price.

Leonel closed his eyes once more and reloaded the clip of two rifles. Then, he stood as though using the last of his strength to keep his back straight and began to fire like a madman.

He had done his best to gain an advantage. After stepping out from the last tree and onto expertly cobbled roads, the only thing between him and a lineup of 200 soldiers was a large water fountain with a mermaid sitting on a whale's back.



From the vantage point of the small troop, it was difficult to see Leonel from behind the water fountain. But, his bullets seemed to have eyes of their own.

Flying through the mermaid's arms, beneath the whale's fins, through the jets of water, he rained hails of lethals shots toward them as though he could see through everything.

Sometimes, his bullets even hit the statue. But, despite the sturdy material it was made of, they pierced right through. Leonel seemed to always perfectly aim toward the weakest and thinnest parts of the statue, tearing through it like tofu.

"Fire!"

A commander roared, suddenly seeing his troop fall into turmoil. It had only been a few seconds, but over a dozen of his men had fallen, unable to rise again.

BANG!

Another sniper rifle rang out as a hail of bullets came from the troop of 200. But, Leonel pretended as though he hadn't sensed anything, his steps only shifting slightly.

The loud clanging of metal resounded as the bullet rebounded off of Aina's ax. Despite the power, Leonel's stance was strong and steady. It was like he didn't know his neck had been moments away from being pierced through.

"Narrow the formation!" The commander barked.

Leonel's lips shrunk into a fine line. [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

'I can't shoot anymore down from this angle. If I can take advantage of the fountain, so can they' | In that case' |'

Leonel's fire suddenly concentrated on the water fountain.

Seeing that no more men were falling, the commander felt that his previous command had been the perfect response. Leonel wasn't the only one who could take advantage of cover.

"Hold! HOLD! FORWARD!"

The troop charged. There was barely a hundred meters between them and Leonel. As long as they closed in on him, they could fan out the formation and he would be surrounded.

But what happened next left them speechless.

Leonel suddenly dashed forward and leapt into the air. With all his might, he kicked with both legs at the whale's head.

Those who caught faint glimpses of this were left speechless. The action seemed ridiculous. However, those thoughts couldn't last long.

With a BANG, the water fountain collapsed and the remains of the mermaid and whale soared through the air for a moment before skidding violently along the ground. PANDA NOVEL

The commander of the troop's eyes widened. He could have never guessed that Leonel's concentrated fire was aimed at the base of the statue's connection to the fountain. In that moment, he had weakened it just enough to kick it to the ground.

"Scatter! Scatter!" He roared.

PANDA-NOVEL Unfortunately for him, Leonel was riding atop the sliding whale, his hands pointed forward with two tactical rifles. Almost like a charging cavalry, he madly surged forward, bullets raining down with him as their point of origin.

The whale slid across the ground, smashing into the front line of the troop and squashing several of them before finally slowing down.

Leonel didn't even bother with the rest of the scattering troop. This was the perfect opportunity.

He jumped down from the whale, dashing toward the inner city doors with all of his might.

Bullets rained down toward him, but they all clanged off of Aina's ax.

However, in all his fervor, Leonel had forgotten one thing.

The moment he stepped out of the inner city and back into the outer, he felt that his Force was no longer restricted. This was good. ρ??(???????)

What was bad was that he had forgotten that there was an outer city. And in the outer city, he saw a unit of eight waiting below the steps for him. These eight alone gave Leonel far more pressure than those 200 soldiers behind him had.

Leonel gaze met theirs, his breathing ragged. It felt as though a hot coal was traveling through his lungs.

'Dammit.'

Leonel had already been pushing past his limits for too long already. He had been half a step into his grave before he even entered the Fort, let alone now after being madly chased for over an hour.

Just now, he had been on the highest of highs, thinking that he had escaped, only to find that he hadn't at all. He came crashing down heavier than he went soaring up. The pain in his body seemed to want to tear him apart.

"Put down the weapons, boy. You've done enough harm."

The man who led the group seemed to be quite old, but his eyes and voice held a youthful vigor to them. There was something especially magical about his voice that made one want to bend over backwards to please him.

Seeing that Leonel was a bit dazed, the special unit slowly made their way forward, encircling Leonel.

It wasn't that Leonel couldn't tell what was happening. In fact, from the very beginning, the pleasing voice hadn't influenced him at all. He just wanted a bit more time to rest, just a bit longer to catch his breath.

'I'm so tired' Leonel thought with haggard gasps.

However, the special unit continued to approach and Leonel realized that the few seconds they would take to surround him wouldn't make much of a difference to the situation of his body at all.

Leonel's grip of his rifles tightened. He willed them to flex as though pulling out the last of his strength. Once they were close enough he would move and leap over this hurdle too.

Who would have known that at that exact moment, just when Leonel was going to hit another wall, he would suddenly feel that his back was exceptionally light all of a sudden?

His eyes blinked open, but he hardly reacted when a shadow appeared between the eight whose expressions were now changing drastically.

A scythe of red-gold energy severed their necks at once, causing a rain of eight fountains of blood to shoot into the skies.

Beneath the rain, a petite woman took a black helmet off, her appearance making Leonel's heart, which had been steady even through all of this, beat wildly.

The crimson droplets seemed to radiate beneath her aura, her amber eyes shining so brightly that they appeared to be golden. Her long hair fluttered in the wind, catching the moonlight like a waterfall beneath the cool night air.

“Aina’!”

At that moment, Leonel suddenly understood something.

According to the analysis machines of the Empire, Aina’s ability fell under the healing type. This had always been odd to Leonel because the way Aina had described her ability to him, it didn’t seem to have anything to do with healing.

But now it seemed that he was wrong. Healing might very well be the foundation of Aina’s ability and was the root of her strength. But, her healing must only work on her own body.

Aina probably guessed how things would go if they returned, but instead of stopping Leonel, she allowed him to go back and see the truth of the world for himself. It was possible that she had been healed for over a day already. No, maybe she never spent very long injured in the first place.

Worried that they might be being monitored, she continued to feign her injuries to make them underestimate the pair and only made a move at the most opportune time.

Aina took out a jewelry headpiece and put it on. A small, fingernail sized gem dangled from her forehead, looking like a drop of water.

Then, she turned toward Leonel and smiled lightly.

“You’ve done enough, I’ll handle the rest.”

“So beautiful’!” Leonel mumbled like an idiot.

Aina blushed profusely, her Valkyrie-like aura vanishing like a receding tide.

Feeling embarrassed and seeing that Leonel still wanted to stare for a bit longer, she marched up the stairs, grabbed his wrist, and pulled him along. If she didn't do this, this little fool would stare for who knows how much longer. It wasn't as though they were out of the woods yet.

The moment she turned away from Leonel's bumbling appearance, her gaze turned cold.

'This little fool really made an enemy out of the Ascension Empire just for me' | In that case, anyone who stops me from taking him out of here can be cleaved in two.'

## Chapter 94

[Bonus chapter for 900 powerstones ... and we're apparently already closing in on 1200... \*sigh\*]

In truth, Leonel was a bit embarrassed that he never realized that Aina had been awake the whole time. He had done his best to ignore the fact she was on his back, or else he would have lost himself in the softness of her figure. How could he, a lifelong virgin, resist the feeling of those two soft things on his back. He ultimately had no choice but to practically ignore her completely.

Leonel shook his head as he ran at Aina's pace. Now that he had lost a couple hundred pounds on his back, his fatigue didn't seem as bad anymore. Well, that and the fact he didn't seem to be needed.

Aina was like a one woman artillery unit. She didn't seem to need Leonel's help at all. He would only occasionally snipe some danger in the distance. Now that his Force wasn't restricted, it seemed that his Internal Sight increased almost tenfold.

From what he could see, he had an area of sharpness and an area of vagueness. Within about 200 meters, he could see things as though he was looking at them with his own eyes. Between 200 and 1000 meters, everything gradually grew foggy until he couldn't sense anything.

PANDA-NOVEL When he paired this foggy region with the primal instincts of the primitive consciousness, he was able to sense general areas which harbored danger and killing intent. Like this, he sent warning shots in those directions. Whether he hit them or not, he didn't care. He only wanted to disrupt their rhythm so they couldn't snipe at Aina.

What Leonel couldn't have guessed was that Aina didn't actually need his help at all.

"Stop shooting, you'll only expose our exact location. Let them snipe. They won't be able to touch a hair on your head."

When Leonel heard these words, he blinked. How had the roles reversed so suddenly? When did he become the damsel in distress?PANDA-NOVEL.COM

It wasn't long before Leonel understood where Aina's confidence stemmed from.

They charged down the densely packed region of residential homes.

From the inner city doors to the outer city gates, there was a main road that plowed straight through to connect them both. This wasn't exactly a great design as it made the Fort easier to breach if the main gates fell, but Leonel assumed it was like this for the sake of convenience.

Leonel thought that Aina would avoid the main road. Their only advantage now was the fact there was only a pair of them. They should take advantage of this and try to find another exit. Leonel didn't believe the Leum family would be stupid enough to make a city with only one gate. It was possible that Miles had hidden the others with his ability. In that case, he just had to get close so that he could see through them with Internal Sight.

But, Aina didn't do this. She charged through the straight main road. If one came, she cut him down. If two came, they both lost their heads. If ten came, they fell all the same.

Her efficiency was scary to the point Leonel felt numb. It took Leonel almost two hours to exit the inner city, but Aina seemed to be closing in on the Fort's gates in less than 20. Nothing was capable of stopping her.

The truth was that this was due to the fact the outer city had no Force disrupting towers, so the technology available was much weaker here. But, Leonel seemed to have forgotten this and only had endless praise for Aina.

“Halt!” pANDA nOVEL

The next poor commander stepped up, trying to stop them.

Unfortunately, her fate was not much different than those who came before her. It wasn't as though the special units would all remain idle in the Fort. The one Aina took out in one fell swoop was the only one not stationed at a distant Perimeter.

Aina's eyes suddenly flashed as the bang of a sniper rifle rang out.

Leonel's heart stopped. He could sense the bullet enter the sharp range of his Internal Sight and could see that it was perfectly aimed at Aina's forehead. But, he simply wasn't fast enough to stop it.

Who knew that Aina would have begun moving even before the shot rang out? He was so lost in worry that he didn't even notice she had shifted her attention toward that direction long ago.

Her ax swung downward, cleaving the bullet in two.

Without even a pause, she took another step forward and swung again, cleaving another bullet that was aimed for Leonel.

Leonel blinked in shock. 'She wasn't faster than the bullet, she just acted before it could get here as though she predicted it'!

A moment later, Leonel's gaze focused on the headpiece on Aina's head. It had a delicate necklace-like structure that wrapped around her head like a headband. The singular jewel it had dangled from her forehead like a clear drop of water.

He suddenly understood. Leonel received a Quasi Bronze Reward. How could Aina not receive one as well?



Aina turned back and charged forward again. Her ax alternated from taking heads to cutting down bullets. The way her body danced with that battle ax twice the size of her body made her look like a crimson fairy. The night was dark all around, with the sole exception of the red-gold aura around her body.

“ ‘! I know that my mind is my greatest weakness too. But this can help me cover for that. Just rely on me for now.” Aina said confidently.

Leonel finally understood. While he thought he had no choice but to bow to the demands of the Empire, Aina never even thought of that as being an option. She hid the fact she had this treasure, which was the reason why the wererat was able to catch her off guard. Now that the situation had reached this point, there was no reason for her to continue hiding it at all.

‘Good’! I was worried that the Junior Governor Duke might come around for a last stand and catch Aina off guard. But if her mind is protected by a Quasi Bronze treasure that seems able to increase her perception, there’s no problem then.’

Leonel felt that he could finally breathe easy. The way things were going now, even if he simulated it with his Dream World, the likelihood of them leaving this Fort unscathed was over 90%.

‘What should we do after we leave though’!’ Leonel frowned.

Eventually, he realized that the only option was to leave Earth. They stood no chance staying here. Their only option was to hope the dictionary could find them a high enough rank Zone to enter so they could earn a teleportation award to another world.

‘Uncle Montez will probably be able to tell me about which worlds are relatively safer and more accepting of outsiders’!’

Leonel was lost in his thoughts when it happened.

The explosion was so loud he couldn’t hear anything for a long while. No, he could hear something. It was a loud, high-pitched noise. If Leonel had to pick something it reminded him of, he would

immediately think of the flat-lining of a heartbeat. It was the kind of sound a hospital's emergency room would have on replay' ;

Blood dripped from his ears and a searing heat assaulted him. It was like a wall of invisible fire had crashed into his body. The wind it came with was almost strong enough to knock him off his feet.

The heat was so excruciating Leonel had no choice but to close his eyes. The last sight he saw was Aina frozen in place in front of him. She was perfectly fine, but she seemed to be just as shocked as he was.

" ; They' ;'

Leonel's mind went blank. He opened his eyes once more to find Alna in the same place. But, the residential homes that had been ahead of them were blown to pieces. A rain of stone and rubble fell all around.

As Leonel's hearing slowly came back, the first thing his ears latched onto was the screaming.

From the start of Leonel and Aina's escape, they hadn't seen a single civilian. They hid and cowered in their homes, not wanting to get involved. Likewise' ; The two of them left them alone.

But now, their screams filled their ears like treacherous demons clawing at their hearts.

"Ha' ;"

Leonel's bottom lip hung loosely, a sound that seemed a cross of a sad laugh and a sigh escaping thanks to them.

On a distant tower, Miles watched on without a hint of emotion. They had only missed because the weaker technology they were strapped to without the Force disrupting towers was a bit lacking. But, he was confident that there wouldn't be a second time.

He didn't dare to use such a tactic in the inner city. Those people were nobility. But, what were these poverty stricken leeches to society worth to him?

"Fire again." He said coldly.

Another volley was launched. This time, its aim was true.

Chapter 95

"No!"

Leonel shook himself awake, dragging up what reserve strength he had managed to regain while allowing Aina to lead to swoop her into his arms. He tried to cover Aina completely, hoping that her ax could block the rest of the attack.

BOOM!

Pain like nothing Leonel had ever felt in his life before assaulted his body. Without suspense, he was sent flying. He couldn't even tell up from down anymore, let alone telling just how far it was he had flown.

The Quasi Bronze chain necklace on his neck splintered. It was just a tiny crack, but it came with a sound almost as loud as the bomb itself. Or, maybe Leonel's sense of sound had just been completely thrown off as well. He really couldn't tell.

"Aina? Aina!"

Leonel roared, barely able to hear his own voice. Only after shouting with all he had did he faintly hear himself.

Aina's state was far more sorry than his own. He had tried his best to cover her back while her ax had covered much of her front, but her legs and some of her arms had been completely exposed.

Leonel's blurry vision teared up when he saw her, a lump quickly swelling in his throat.

Her legs had been charred beyond recognition. What was once delicate, fair skin was blackened beyond recognition. It was so bad that she didn't even bleed, even her blood itself seemed to have burnt to ash.

Her arms were in a slightly better situation, but this somehow made it more gruesome. Severe burns of the fourth degree almost exposed her bones. Her flesh bubbled almost like water, producing a scene that made one's stomach upturn.

Leonel's knees and palms surrounded her almost like a mother protecting her cubs. He wanted to scream and roar, but his inner organs didn't seem to want to allow that.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Blood leaked from his orifices, partially obscured by the soot and grime that coated his body.

Leonel quickly shuffled around in his pockets. When he found the bracelet he was looking for, he slipped it onto Aina's wrist as gently as he could.

Regret filled his heart.

'I'm so stupid, I'm so stupid. I should have given it to her earlier. Why didn't I give it to her earlier?'

He felt as though something was clawing at his chest and eating his flesh.

He had had this bracelet ever since he exited the Mayan Tomb. It was only a Tier 4 Black treasure, but since it was one time use, it was countless times more powerful than other treasures of its tier. He chose it just for Aina, so that he could protect her and help her.

But, when he saw her kill Conrad like that, he began to question everything. Even after he learned that she had killed Conrad for the sake of protecting Yuri, he still couldn't forget that scene.

Leonel knew that he liked Aina more than even he, himself, could put into words. But, there was always a piece of himself that remained restrained, a part of him that couldn't accept her. So'! He never gave her the bracelet he saw as the symbol of his feelings.

He was so stupid. Impossibly stupid. Regret was seeping through his veins like a venomous poison.

Leonel roared like an enraged wild beast, ignoring the pain of his inner organs. He could hardly hear it himself, but it spread throughout the Fort like a shockwave.

"Fire." PANDA NOVEL

Miles coldly watched on, a disdainful glint lighting his eyes. His only regret was that such a good treasure would likely not survive the wreckage and would have to be buried along with them.

To the side, Simeon's expression was far more sadistic. He remembered Leonel's voice when he shot that bullet toward him just two hours ago.

'Unfortunate'. Those were the words he had said. As though the interaction had been meaningless to him. Watching Leonel suffer like this after humiliating him like that made him the itch in his heart lessen.

'It's too bad the child of that whore will die without repaying the family for the genes she was given. But, so be it.'

Leonel's maddened roar was drowned out by the explosion.

BOOM!

Leonel felt the bones of his body fracture and crack as he slammed into something heavy. His vision was too blurred to see where he was, he could only barely tell with his Internal Sight. The only thing he knew for sure was that he was holding onto Aina.

"Li'!"

Leonel heard a weak voice by his ear along with the splintering of another treasure. The gem of the bracelet he had just slipped onto Aina's hand fractured and dimmed, falling from its socket.

At first, he thought the voice was trying to say his name, but this wasn't true.

"Little fool! Take it." *ρ???*

Leonel blinked, feeling something pressed against his chest. It was only after his senses were barely half recovered that he realized it was Aina talking and she was pushing something against his chest.

He looked down to find a tall and slender piece of paper between her hand and his chest. No, it looked too much like a piece of fabric to be called paper. However, all Leonel could see was Aina's hand. How she managed to continue holding on to her ax in one and lift the other to give him this thing, whatever it was, Leonel had no idea.

"This! Is a tick! et. Just pour! your Force into! it and! it will ta! ke you to! an! other! world. I've al! ready vet! ted it! it shou! ld be sa! fe."

Leonel's expression flickered, his throat running dry.

"Fire." Miles once more said coldly.

"Ju "" Junior Governor Duke, we can't do that. They've been blown too close to the walls. If we shoot again, we'll compromise the safety of the Fort. Some Invalids have already been attracted by the noise."

Within the tower, the commander of the post hesitated but still clenched his teeth to explain. He was already horrified by Miles' actions. Now that he had found such a good excuse, he had to make use of it. Miles might not care about the common people, but he at least cared about his own safety! right?

"Who cares, we'll just build another wall." Miles said coldly.

They had built such a great wall in such a short period of time. They could easily do it again. Not to mention the fact that it would just have to be a repair and not a complete reconstruction

This time, another official stepped in.

“Junior Governor Duke, the alloys we used to build the wall were all from emergency stores in case of a Class 9: Red event like this one. They’ve been used up already and we won’t have the technology or safety to mine such ores again in the short term.”

Everyone held their breaths, waiting for the Junior Governor Duke’s response.

“ ‘! Send all available units down.”

They all sighed breaths of relief.

“You heard the Junior Governor Duke! Send down the orders!”

“Wait.” Miles suddenly stopped them, causing them to feel nervous once again. “Call Tier 5 Admiral Bennett as well.”

By the Fort walls, Leonel still hadn’t realized he had been sent so close to his original goal. But, even if he had, he hardly had the strength to move now and there were enemies all around.

PANDA-NOVEL “‘! Take it!” Aina spoke firmly. “They won’t’! kill me. The’! Bra’! zinger family ne’! eds me’!”

She fumbled around weakly and also managed to find a pill.

“This can ‘! stimulate your’! po’! ten’! tial for five minutes’! but it’! will leave’! you we’! ak for th’! ree days af’! terwa.. rd. Only take it if’! you fi’! nd dan’! ger on the oth’! er side’!”

Aina coughed violently.

“I look like’! I’m in a ’! bad state but my ’! body will’! heal soon’! Don’t’! worry’!”

Leonel gripped Aina’s hand which had pressed against his chest once more.

“What world is it?” Leonel asked with a gruff voice.

Aina’s soft lips curled into a smile, seemingly happy that Leonel would ask this.

“It’s called’! Terrain’!” She laughed a little before chuckling. “‘! It seems that’! we aren’t the’! only ones with bad’! naming sense’!”

Hearing that Aina’s voice was slowly getting steadier, Leonel smiled, the grip he had on her small hand tightening slightly. It seemed she hadn’t been lying. Her body really was recovering at an astonishing speed.

“You’re right, Earth and Terrain really are bad names.” Leonel responded lightly. His words seemed to put Aina at ease for a moment. But, she froze at what she heard next.

“Wait for me there. I’ll come to get you with a present far better than that bracelet, I promise.”

Aina didn’t have the time to react before the paper turned fabric she had pressed against Leonel’s chest was pasted onto her forehead.

The last thing she saw was Leonel’s smile and the gentle, loving looking in his eyes before she vanished.

A teleportation ticket could only work for one life form at a time. Even the Metal Spirit Aina had been holding onto for him couldn’t follow her in.



But, Leonel was calm as he looked at the red pill in his hand. Without hesitation, he weakly stood and swallowed it.

## Chapter 96

[Bonus chapter for 1200 you little demons]

Leonel closed his eyes forcefully as though trying to blink his fatigue away.

Deep in his gut, a flaming hot coal landed. An instant later, it burst.

As though hundreds of snakes were racing through his body, Leonel felt like all his veins, arteries and blood vessels had suddenly been lit on fire.

His eyes opened, a deep red hidden within the depths of their pale green.

His head turned slightly in one particular direction. The cold within his gaze bubbling forth.

Miles and Simeon felt a cold sweat mat their backs. For a moment, they found it difficult even to breathe, let alone move.

”! It would take me 8 minutes and 36 seconds to make it there and kill them in this state’! It’s not enough time’!’

Leonel had never felt such a strong desire to kill. It was worse than just wanting to end someone’s life. It was deep to the point of wanting to feel the warmth of their blood.

He was pissed.

Of course, he was mad about not being able to kill them. But, he was even more pissed off about his own weakness.

It felt cliché. He was certain that he had read the same exact line in a hundred if not a thousand books, shows and movies before. But, it wasn't until now that he felt it to the depths of his soul, a yearning that was seeking to roar out. [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Others thought that Leonel didn't like the result of his Gene Analysis Exam because he didn't like being a quarterback. However, this wasn't the truth at all. What Leonel actually didn't like was the idea of someone dictating what it was he could and couldn't do. The feeling of someone cornering him like that left him enraged.

Even he didn't know what he wanted to do with his life yet, so how dare someone else decide his course for him? Who were they to do such a thing? To treat him like a puppet on a string they could pull every which way they desired?

Those innocent people who died today were just like that. Weak. Having their lives, their fates toyed with on a whim. Was he really much different from them?

Leonel had never been an ambitious person. From a certain perspective, it could be considered to be one of his flaws. Maybe the only thing in his life he had ever truly wanted was Aina's answer to his confessions. That singular, childish want had actually pushed him to such an extreme. He didn't even really remember how it happened, but here he was. He was now an enemy of the Ascension Empire behemoth.

That was how simple Leonel was. Such a small thing yet he was willing to go so far for it.

Aina wasn't the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, that was Joan. She had only ever said his name once. He didn't even feel that he knew much about her.

It was just a feeling. It was a feeling that told him that there was no better woman to be by his side. So, he strove to make that happen. It was nothing more and nothing less.

If others heard his thoughts, they would think that he was crazy. Such a man' ¦ If he ever had ambition' ¦ If he ever had something he wanted to accomplish' ¦ Just how scary would he be?

However, now, Leonel wanted a second thing.

Their heads. Until he had both of their heads leaking with blood before him, he wouldn't rest.

'The next time I come, I'll make you pay for taking Aina from me.' PANDA NOVEL

These were his true thoughts. He didn't mention the innocents who had fallen even once. This was somewhat cruel! But it was human.

Leonel turned toward the tall silver walls of the Fort. He was not even a hundred meters from them now. With the strength flowing through his body and his shoes, it wouldn't even take him 30 seconds to leap over it, defeat the guards on the walls and leap down to the other side.

However, it was at that moment he suddenly heard a familiar voice.

"Let me go!"

"! James' !?" Leonel frowned, looking back.

By now, many guards had long since surrounded Leonel while he was deep in thought, they were even within ten meters of him. But, Leonel had simply ignored them, not sparing them a glance.

However, he hadn't expected to hear James' voice here.

James' father was a Tier 5 official. Even among those in the inner city, his status was high. While Miles dared to brazenly kill commoners, James shouldn't have been in any danger. So, what was going on?

Was Miles this stupid? He could still keep control of the situation before, but if he started targeting nobles too, he wouldn't be able to keep hold on power for long.

PANDA-NOVEL Leonel's gaze landed on James who was about 20 meters away, struggling under the control of a man with his face obscured by a black tactical helmet. Even in the dark, it was easy for Leonel to make out the gun to James' temple.

One of the commanders who hadn't moved due to the overwhelming pressure emitting from Leonel sneered, his knees still trembling somewhat as he drummed up his courage. p??J??????

"Obediently allow yourself to be captured, or else your friend will suffer a fate worse than death."

Leonel stood somewhat at a loss, giving the units who had been surrounding him more courage.

"Leo! Don't listen to them! Just run!"

" ' | "

Leonel didn't say anything for a long while. In reality, it was barely five seconds, but those five seconds somehow seemed like an eternity.

However, to those watching, it only seemed natural. Wasn't he just struggling, trying to decide whether to escape with all his might or save his best friend? But, the words Leonel said next left them at a loss.

"James. Are you sure you want me to kill him?"

Leonel's voice was calm and even. This was already shocking enough, but the words he said were even more ridiculous. What did he mean by that?

James suddenly hesitated, his face painted with confusion.

"I've never seen your father before." Leonel started slowly. "But, this only makes sense. My father retired from his Tier 5 position and I don't come from a large family, so it only makes sense that I'm not worthy of rubbing elbows with the Bennett's too much."

The more Leonel spoke, the paler James became.

“People about six feet tall aren’t rare, but those who could be as tall as you are quite a small percentage. You have an A-grade defensive ability, compared to others, what you should fear the least are low class guns that can function without Force disruption. Lastly, it would be quite stupid for Miles to turn on the nobles that help him keep everyone in line, don’t you think?”

Leonel continued to calmly speak as though not sensing more and more units closing in on him.

“So, I will ask you again, James.

“Are. You. Sure. That. You. Want. Me. To. Kill. Him.”

Leonel’s words were like a hammer taken to a stake at James’ heart.

Seeing that James didn’t respond, Leonel shook his head.

“I’m disappointed’ ¦ I really’ ¦ took you as my closest friend’ ¦”

“Bullshit!” James suddenly roared. “You pretend to care about so many things, you pretend to be kind hearted, but all you really care about are things ending up exactly like you want them! You don’t like killing only because you don’t want to deal with the guilt! You don’t like playing football only because you didn’t get to choose it! You only want to do things your way and nothing else matters!”

Leonel frowned. He couldn’t make sense of the jumbled mess James was speaking. He could feel that this ‘friend’ of his had had this on his mind for a long time, but he wasn’t eloquent enough to put them into words in any sort of short and concise way. Even more so, Leonel didn’t know where this was coming from.

Yet, somehow, even without a true cohesive line connecting his thoughts, James’ words seemed to stab at something deep within Leonel’s heart.

“You’re a fucking sociopathic hypocrite!”

“ ‘|”

Leonel looked toward James who was bordering on hyperventilation. There was a slight hint of pain in the depths of his eyes that he was unable to hide.

“ ‘| I don’t know whether or not the things you said are true.” Leonel finally responded. “I really don’t care about many things. Goals? I don’t have any yet. When my father mentioned the fact that my mother was actually still alive’ | I didn’t feel much. In all my life, I never even asked him about her.

“There are very few things that I am certain of. The first is that I love my dad. The second is that Aina is the woman for me. The third was that you were the person closest to me outside of my own dad’ | but it seemed that this was me being too naive.

“What I do know, though, is that regardless of what reasons you have’ | At this moment, you’re trying to push me toward my death.”

James’ face became as white as a sheet. No matter how hard he tried, he simply didn’t have a response.

Leonel turned toward the man holding a gun to James’ head.

“I hope it was worth it using your son like that, Mr. Bennett.”

Leonel turned and left. Of course, there were numerous attempts to stop him, but they were all foolhardy. Miles even grit his teeth and fired the canons once more, not caring for the damage that was done to the walls, but Leonel simply used his shoes to leap out of the range of the explosion.

Without the burden of Aina and her ax, and being so close to the walls thanks to Miles’ mad volleys, Leonel survived within his five minute timer.

With that, he vanished.

## Chapter 97

Leonel walked slowly, using his silver rod to hold himself up.

His once handsome face was obscured by soot and grime, his brownish-gold hair loosely hanging downward. One could barely see his pale green eyes between its strands, but what one could see would make it impossible not to shiver.

There was some sadness in there. After all, now Leonel had no one. His father had gone off on his own to some unknown place, Aina was now on another world, and now, the last person he thought he could trust on Earth had turned on him as well.

Compared to the horrible things truly unfortunate people have to deal with, this wasn't much. However, to Leonel, who had never really suffered in his life, it was a huge blow.

However, this wasn't what would shake people to their core. What was so shocking in those eyes was the coldness. An indifferent, calculating coldness.

Leonel hadn't even left the range of the Fort's influence, but he was calculating. Like an emotionless machine, he ran through plan after plan, each of which would lead to the death of Miles and Simeon.

As he watched them die in his Dream World again and again, the gaze in his eyes grew colder' | more inhuman.  
PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The faint lights of dawn could be seen on the horizon. Soon, the night would end and the sun would rise.

Leonel's steps only grew slower and slower, his body becoming less and less able to hold itself together.

"Since you're already here' | Is there a need to continue hiding?" Leonel spoke plainly.

He had noticed this person long ago, but hadn't said anything. He had been hoping that this person would come out and attack him. To the current Leonel, sooner was better. His body was already in a sorry state. If he was forced to continue, he wouldn't be able to take another step.

Leonel had thought of pretending to find a place to hide and rest. Like this, he could wait for this person to make their move then. However, he felt that if he lied down now, his body would shut down.

At that moment, a shadow slowly came out. PANDA NOVEL


He looked like an oriental man with dark black hair and eyes. But that was the only thing normal about him. The weird things were almost too numerous to list, but even the short version could make one's expression twist weirdly.

For one thing, the man was completely naked. He wore not a single thing. Other than the weird chain from his neck that held a card that dangled from one of its links, the sniper rifle strapped to his back, and the knife in his hand, he had nothing else on him.

Secondly, his body was covered in tattoos. In the 24th century, a tattoo artist teamed up with a leading expert in biological nano technology to create what they called 'Vision Tattoos'. They were essentially tattoos that moved along one's body in a repetitive, loop-like fashion. Almost like a 'gif' from the 21st century.

If it was just the fact this man had a vision tattoo, it would be fine. But why was his vision tattoo a porno?

It was so weird that Leonel didn't even think to ask himself why it was the technology of the vision tattoo seemed unaffected. His virgin eyes couldn't leave the plump woman being plowed by three men at once. He couldn't help wondering if she was okay.

The third weird thing about this man was the fact that half of his body was covered in bandages. Yet, not only had he chased Leonel, but he was actually smiling so masochistically, as though he was enjoying his own pain. 

Who else could this person be if not Xinghai?



PANDA-NOVEL “‘! I wanted to wait until we were out of the range of the Fort so that no one would interfere in our battle, but I didn’t expect your body to be so weak now. I bet if that Junior Governor Duke knew this, he wouldn’t have given up chasing you so quickly.”

“Are you finished?” Leonel asked without much of a change to his expression.

Xinghai didn’t get mad at such words. Instead, he sighed.

“It’s a shame. You were good prey, but I don’t have the time to wait for you to recover. Plus, I’m injured too and it’s your fault. So, things are fair, don’t you think?”

Xinghai licked his lips and took a step forward, but what he saw next made him freeze.

Leonel flicked his wrist and a grenade appeared out from his spatial bracelet.

“Since that’s the case, let’s die together.”

Leonel smiled, yet it seemed colder than even Xinghai’s own. Before Xinghai could do anything, Leonel pulled the pin.

However, despite the panicked look on his face, Xinghai was internally sneering.

‘This idiot.’

Xinghai laughed within his heart. Then, he prepared his blink ability and activated it. However, what he saw in the last moment before he disappeared made his eyes squint in confusion.

” ! He threw the grenade away from us’ !? What’ !? Oh no!’

BANG!

The sound wasn't from the grenade. Leonel had chucked it so far away that compared to this bang, it was nothing.

When Xinghai appeared once more, he found a gun placed onto his chest, its hot nozzle burning his skin.

He looked up at Leonel in shock. Then, fell over. Dead.

Leonel watched indifferently as the last of Xinghai's life faded. At that moment, he felt like his arm was about to implode. Without Force disruption towers, the recoil mitigation technology of the handgun didn't work anymore, so he had to take the brunt of it himself. However, even though he was prepared, it had still hurt like hell.

'It's too bad that you talk too much' ¦' Leonel thought, walking toward the card that Xinghai had hung from his neck in curiosity.

The moment Xinghai gave Leonel too much information to deduce some things from, he was finished. He never stood a chance. Even he had no idea, even in death, how Leonel had seen through him so easily.

Chapter 98

[Bonus chapter for 1500... next week there will be bonus chapter per 350 powerstones instead > ; ]

The moment Xinghai said his injuries were caused by Leonel, it made the latter think of a few things. There was no one he injured like that. Could it be that Xinghai was referring to the canons Miles was using?

But, when Leonel saw the sniper rifle on his back, he realized something else. Could this have been the sniper he shot at? Shouldn't he be dead? Leonel had been very confident in that shot' ¦

That was when Leonel understood. If that sniper managed to survive, there was an 84% chance that he had an ability that allowed him to do so.

Judging by Leonel's observation, there was a 7% chance this ability was defensive and a 91% chance that this ability was evasive. It was less likely to be defensive, or else Xinghai wouldn't be so injured. Leonel then decided that this ability was either related to high speed, some sort of invulnerability, or potentially teleportation.

In the beginning, Leonel had given teleportation the lowest odds because he intuitively knew it must be a rare high class ability. However, when Xinghai stepped toward him, Leonel realized his speed stat was far too low, so teleportation moved up a rank. That left invulnerability and teleportation.

So, Leonel set up a test with the grenade. He didn't believe that Xinghai's ability was impregnable, or else he wouldn't have been injured. He also didn't believe that Xinghai's ability had a long duration, or, again, he wouldn't have been injured. [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

This led Leonel to ultimately conclude that Xinghai's ability was short term invulnerability or short distance teleportation. Regardless of which it was! He was finished the moment he took Leonel's bait.

'This is really too inconvenient.' Leonel shook his head. 'If I didn't have to speak out loud to the dictionary, I wouldn't have to go through so much trouble. It could have just directly told me what I needed to know!'

This event was one no one was destined to know about. It happened in a place without spectators and Leonel didn't even seem to care much about it. However! If others were to know what happened here! How Leonel, an 18 year old boy, played a Five Star Arms Professional to death while barely able to stand on his own two legs!

The world would come to know that a monster had awakened.

'Slayer Legion?' Leonel's eyes narrowed as he looked at the card Xinghai left behind.

The Slayer Legion! It was a name not many knew about. This wasn't because they tried to hide themselves. It was quite the opposite, actually. There was nothing this group wanted more than to be

widely recognized and renowned. However, they were always pressed beneath the thumb of the Ascension Empire. PANDA NOVEL

The few who knew its name were either high ranking government officials or other unlucky individuals that happened to be present during one of its many attempted and failed campaigns.

By now, those who were clever enough had likely already guessed exactly what this 'Slayer Legion' was. It was precisely the rebel army that dared to face up against the mighty Ascension Empire.

In order to dehumanize and emasculate the rebels, the Ascension Empire suppressed news of them to the extreme. It was to the point that many weren't even aware that they had a name at all.

Leonel didn't expect Xinghai to be affiliated with them. He was quite bold to wear it around on his neck like that. But, then again, he didn't exactly seem like a normal individual.

"The rebel army, huh'?" Leonel flipped Xinghai's card in his hand. "' I'm not interested in joining, but I can probably use these guys to kill them faster'!"

\*\* PANDA NOVEL

In the lofty Ascension Province, there was a palace that stood as tall as a mountain. Beautiful golds and silvers were all around, displaying an impossible to grasp majesty.

Within the royal court, nobles from all across the land were gathered. If one were to not be aware of the Metamorphosis, it would be impossible to guess from this place that such a horrible event was going on. Let alone how immaculate the Ascension Palace looked from the outside, even much of the Ascension Province seemed completely unaffected.

Still, despite how many powerful men had gathered here, there was one man who had so much presence that they were all completely drowned.

He sat on the throne with a light smile on his face. He looked to be quite old based on his wrinkles, maybe almost 60 years old. But, he had a youthful exuberance that rivaled a 20 year old man in his prime.

His hair was a bright white-gold that almost seemed to radiate its own light. His eyes were like two green emeralds, twinkling as though they were gems. His beard was full and almost looked like a lion's mane, but it was so meticulously groomed that not even a single strand was out of place.

He was handsome to the point of being inhuman and charismatic to the point of being untouchable. He had the kind of air that made it impossible for one to continue holding onto their anger before him.

He was Emperor Gervaise Fawkes. The man who wielded the most power on Earth.

At this moment, a man kneeled before him with an ugly expression, explaining a great many things that he listened to seriously.

“Outrageous!”

One of the nobles roared as they listened to this story.

“Two children actually dare to be so brazen just because they were awakened as Variants?! What is your Royal Blue Province doing, Governor Duke Leum?! You can't contain two commoners?!”

The kneeling man wore an ugly expression, but he didn't refute, waiting for His Majesty's response. He knew that his enemies in the court wouldn't allow him room to maneuver now that his son had made such a big mistake. The only option was to come clean. Hiding it would only make things worse.

Suddenly, the Emperor began to laugh. The laughter was so jovial and happy that the Royal Court was stunned silent.

“Leonel Morales is it? HAHA!” Emperor Fawkes continued to laugh. “You're asking me what to do about a teenage boy? Do whatever you want, go all out. Kill him if you can, though I doubt you'll be able to.”

PANDA-NOVEL The words left them speechless. What was going on'!?

However, Emperor Fawkes continued to laugh.

“Killed a few nobles? Killed several thousand commoners? Disobeyed direct orders? So what?!

“If you can, you can go ahead and kill him. In fact, if anyone can kill him, I will reward you greatly. The second Province we clear after the Ascension Province will be yours if you succeed.”

“ ‘! Pardon’!?” Governor Duke Leum thought he must have heard incorrectly. That must be it’! right?

Unfortunately, Emperor Fawkes continued to laugh.

“Leonel, is it? My daughter truly gave me a great grandson. Kill some more, rampage some more, who cares? A Fawkes man should be exactly like this.”

Governor Duke Leum directly fainted. He collapsed to the ground, willing what he had just heard away in his dream land.

## Chapter 99

The Ascension Royal Court was in an uproar.

They all knew that Emperor Gervaise Fawkes had had two children in his lifetime “” his eldest daughter and his younger son. The talent of the latter didn’t need to be mentioned. Whether it was his intelligence, elegance, or personal strength, not a single one was lacking.

However, despite his talent, the Emperor never formally handed the Crown Prince title to him despite it being tradition to do so. No one was aware of the reason why. But, Gervaise Fawkes was a near mythical figure. Those who dared to question his decisions simply didn’t exist anymore.

When it came to the princess, though, they were completely in the dark. The last time she was seen, she wasn't even ten years old. Since then, she hadn't made any public appearances. No one knew where she was.

It was only now, with the help of the Emperor's words, that they were aware that she was not only alive, but had married and even had a child? How could it be that the Nation's First Daughter could be married without them being informed? Just what sort of secret was hidden behind this?

Of course, many of them thought it was some sort of conspiracy. But, this idea was quickly thrown out. If it was as simple as the Princess disobeying her father and marrying a man he didn't accept, why would she disappear before she even turned ten? It can't be that she got married as a toddler, right?

In addition, judging by the Princess' age, she should be about 65 years old right now. But, her son was only 18. So, what secrets could have filled the time between her 10th birthday and her 47th?

Regardless of what the truth was, the royal court was at a loss.

The Emperor was encouraging them to go out and kill Leonel if they could, and even promised such mouth watering rewards. But,

Who of them actually dared to take the first step?

\*\*PANDA-NOVEL.COM

After the daily gathering of the Royal Court ended, the Emperor could be found silently meditating, a radiant smile on his face.

Swirls of Force slowly entered his body. Compared to Leonel, the speed was much slower. But, it seemed that he was taking his time as though taking a nice, slow paced stroll.

If one looked closely, it was possible to see the deep lines of wrinkles on the Emperor's face slowly receding. A long while later, he looked to be even younger than he had this morning.

“Imperial Grandfather.”

Seeing that the Emperor had finally opened his eyes, a young man with sharp brows humbly kneeled before him.

The young man’s hair was also a bright white-gold, albeit a few shades dimmer than the Emperor. It seemed that the genes of the Fawkes were quite strong, because his eyes were also a deep shade of green.

He had a handsome, confident bearing. His shoulders were wide and powerful. And, though he didn’t dare to bring a weapon in the presence of his grandfather, the calluses on his otherwise blemishless hands proved that he was adept at using one.

“Noah! Why have you come to see this old throne?”

The Emperor’s smile didn’t fade. He looked no different than a grandfather chatting with his grandson.

“! I have a cousin?” Noah asked, probingly.” PANDA NOVEL

“Of course. You’ve had a cousin for 18 years already. You’re just a little older than he is.”

Noah felt a bit frustrated by this answer. The Emperor obviously knew what he meant by asking this question. The point wasn’t that he had a cousin, the point was about why this was hidden.

PANDA-NOVEL However, Noah had known his grandfather for long enough to know that it would be useless to ask directly. He had to find another way.

“! Are you really going to allow those nobles to try and kill him?”

The Emperor’s smile deepened.



“Yes.” He replied. “A talent isn’t worth much if it’s grown in a greenhouse.”

“A talent’ !?” Noah’s jaw involuntarily set. “Is he more valuable to you than me, Imperial Grandfather?”

One might expect a grandfather put in this sort of situation to go out of their way to settle the hearts of their grandson, but the Emperor did nothing of the sort. Instead, he pondered for a while before nodding as though this was obvious.

“His mother is more talented than your father. And, his father is beyond what your mother could imagine. Isn’t this just the logical conclusion?”

Noah felt his heartbeat slow as though it was sighing in resignation along with him. This sort of answer, he wasn’t surprised by it. What he was surprised by was the latter part of the statement. ρ???)???)???)

Beyond his mother? His father was born on Earth but his mother’ ! How could that be? Just where did Leonel’s father come from to gain such an evaluation? It even faintly sounded like even his Imperial Grandfather, a man who wasn’t scared of anything, held some faint reservations about this man.

“If it’s like this, Imperial Grandfather, why did cousin not grow up with me?”

The Emperor remained silent, continuing to smile at Noah. But this only made the latter feel as though he was being drowned in his own sweat.

“Those who grow up in good environments often end up being useless.” The Emperor finally replied.

“But’ !”

“You’re wondering why I say his father and mother are both better than yours, yet in the same breath also say he didn’t have a good environment to live in?”

“ ‘! Yes.”

The Emperor’s smile deepened. “It’s the same reason why your mother can’t actively take part in your life just yet. Did you think she didn’t have a reason for this?”

Noah’s eyes widened. This was the first bit of happy news he had gotten since this conversation began. It was a simple sentence, but he felt it suffocating him with joy.

Of course, what Noah didn’t know was that despite not being able to actively take part’! Leonel’s father still stayed by his side despite the restrictions. As for why his Imperial Grandfather hid this important piece of information, it was impossible to tell.

Feeling much better, Noah smiled brightly.

“Imperial Grandfather, I would like to leave the Ascension Province and seek out cousin. Then we can face his coming challenge together. You said that a talent in a greenhouse isn’t worth much, right?”

The Emperor shook his head. “No, this is his challenge, not yours.”

Noah quickly lowered his head, realizing that he had gotten a bit too ahead of himself.

“However’! if you’re going off to try and kill him, I can allow you to go.”

Noah felt as though he had been dunked into an ice bath. He flexed his muscles with all of his strength, trying to stop his own trembling. But, the Emperor continued as though he didn’t notice his grandson’s odd state.

“Those Tier 7 officials are really too useless. I could tell that none of them would have the backbone to act. Maybe only that Governor Duke Leum would do something when he’s pushed into a corner.”

The Emperor’s smile deepened.

“That said, not everyone is useless. That Brazinger family and those like them are foolish enough not to fear me, those Tier 8 and above officials as well. Should be an interesting time for your little cousin.

“I have great expectations for the little guy, HAHA! What a good grandson, a good grandson indeed.”

The Emperor laughed for a while longer before turning back to Noah.

“Go on now, Little Noah. There are a lot of starving dogs that have turned their eyes on our piece of meat. And, there are some larger ravenous beasts that want to take a chunk out of our Earth.

“You and your cousin will be the figureheads of your generation. Don’t disappoint me.”

In his laughter, the Emperor’s aura had leaked from his body. The presence was so imposing that Noah almost lay down flat on the ground. He felt that he couldn’t drag up the courage to do anything in opposition to this man.

“ ‘| Yes! Imperial Grandfather!”

\*\*

In the basement wreckage of a collapsed building, Leonel sat against a dusty wall with his muscles spasming in pain. However, his face remained completely expressionless.

To an outside observer, it almost looked like all sorts of snakes and insects were wiggling beneath his skin, yet Leonel didn’t seem to notice. His mind was focused on something completely different.

‘The Segmented Cube swallowed up that sniper’s dead body too’ | It can’t be that it wants me to eat his corpse like I did with the octopus’ | right?’

If Leonel had the spare strength he needed to form them, he would definitely be shedding tears right now. Why did his father leave him behind such a perverted treasure?

## Chapter 100

Leonel suddenly felt immense regret about not asking Montez for an abode type treasure. The feeling of having your body split apart out of your control, yet only being able to lie on hard, stone floors was really too unbearable. If he had a tent treasure like Yuri had, this would be much more convenient.

'Yuri'! I wonder if she'll be okay'!

Leonel frowned at this thought. The only reason why he was able to escape the outer city was because he only had to worry about himself. He knew that going back to get Yuri was impossible. If he had, they both would have died.

He was worried about more than just Yuri. He had no idea if Miles would try to make use of his teammates against him or not.

Leonel shook his head. He knew there was no point in thinking about these things. He just had to grow stronger.

'Since I can't move, what can I do?'

"Hey, do you know why the Segmented Cube took in the corpse of that sniper?"

pANDA-nOVEL [ \*Ping\* The corpse is useful ]

Leonel frowned. "Why is it useful?"

[ \*Ping\* The abilities of existences at and above the Tier 7 Black grade condense within the Ethereal Glabella Evolution Crystals. Force Crafters can refine these into limited use items. ]pANDA-nOVEL.COM

Leonel was speechless. Though this was better than having to eat the corpse, was it that much better? Something about using a human body to refine items made him feel uncomfortable.

“Wait’ |” Leonel suddenly thought of something. “‘ | Does that mean that the octopus was taken for that reason as well?”

[ \*Ping\* Replying to Seed, yes. ]

Leonel’s lip twitched. The sniper’s ability might really be useful to him, but wouldn’t he have to grow tentacles in order to make use of the octopus’ ability? Where was the cool factor? How could he show his face to Aina again if he did such a thing?

“Hold on a second, the Segmented Cube is a lab, right? Doesn’t that mean I should be able to enter it?”

[ \*Ping\* Yes. ]

“Then why the hell am I still here? It can activate on its own to take that pervert’s corpse but can’t see that I’m struggling out here?”

Leonel took out the Segmented Cube, fuming. He didn’t know if there was anywhere comfortable to rest in the lab, but it should at least be cleaner than this dusty place, right? How could it treat him like this? What kind of weird fetish did this cube have to have to like corpses more than the living?

“Hey, little guy.” Leonel knocked on the cube with a knuckle. “Can you let me in?” PANDA NOVEL

The Segmented Cube vibrated, then separated into its pieces once more. Leonel felt his vision go black and, a moment later, he found himself in a small ten by ten by ten meter space.

On the outside, out of Leonel’s vision, the pieces of the Segmented Cube floated around where Leonel had just been sitting. Its jigsaw-like pieces were connected by a faint white light, taking up the same amount of space as Leonel could see from the inside.

“This is the lab?” Leonel blinked, unaware of what was going on outside.

Leonel struggled to stand and looked around.

‘The Force concentration in this place is a lot higher.’ Leonel’s brow raised.

On one side of the lab, there was a silver rack filled with what looked like snowglobes. But, Leonel’s eyes widened when his gaze landed on them.

Within two of the snowglobes, he could see the corpse of the octopus and that sniper floating. It seemed that they had been compressed and placed inside. Leonel guessed that this must be the lab’s method of preservation.

Other than the silver rack, Leonel found the bookshelves and cubicles filled with scrolls his dad left behind on another side of the room. In the middle, that odd table with half-spherical wells that was in the basement was here as well. Though, Leonel wasn’t certain of what it could be used for.

Thinking of something else, Leonel reached into one of the large pockets of the tactical gear he had stolen from the Fort and brought out the Metal Spirit. ρ??C???

The little guy bounced around like an elastic ball, pinging around the confines of its cube as though still trying to escape. But, Leonel could tell that it was just excited.

“Why is this little guy so excited to be here?” Leonel asked.

He thought he would find some great treasure here, but aside from the rack of snowglobes, there really wasn’t anything else special.

[ \*Ping\* Replying to Seed, Spirits need high concentrations of Force and their preferred element to grow and evolve. The half Metamorphosed Earth is akin to a barren wasteland for it. In comparison, the Segmented Cube’s inner space is much better. ]

“The Segmented Cube can generate Force?” Leonel asked expectantly.

[ \*Ping\* No. ]

Leonel frowned. It can't generate Force? Then why is the concentration so high? At a moment like this, he really hated that the dictionary only ever answered his questions directly and hardly embellished.

“Why is the Force concentration so much higher here, then?”

[ \*Ping\* The Segmented Cube has a sterilization ability. ]

“Explain this ability to me.”

[ \*Ping\* Replying to Seed ]

[Sterilization: The refinement and purification of Force. ]

“So the concentration of Force here is dependent on the outside world? What Dimensional grade has it reached?”

[ \*Ping\* Yes. The current concentration is about equal to a Mid-level Fourth Dimensional World. ]

“Mid-level? Worlds of the same Dimension are separated as well, huh'!”

Leonel forgot his pain in all his curiosity. He only wanted to learn more and know more. He found all of this fascinating.

“ ‘! Wait! The concentration of Force’! If I use the lab, wouldn't that make Invalids come after me? Crap!”

Leonel panicked for a moment. He had already been in here for several minutes. This was more than enough time for Invalids to close in on him.

[ \*Ping\* No. The lab is able to hide its Force activity. ]

Leonel's eyes widened before he began to laugh wildly. He was only forced to stop after he felt his lung might come flying out from his throat. This pain was really too unbearable.

His progress had always been limited by those damned Invalids. Even if he was still in the Fort, it wouldn't make a difference due to those Force disrupting towers. But now, with the lab, he could practice [Dimensional Cleanse] without worry. Wasn't this fantastic?

'I'll have to wait for my body to recover before I can do any Force cultivating. But, in the meantime, I can do other things!'

Aina said he would feel weak for three days. So, during those three days, his healing would be exceptionally slow. After those three days passed, though, his body would be able to slowly recover at a more normal pace.

As for how long it would take him to recover after that? Leonel didn't know. But, regardless, since the lab could hide him from Invalids, there was no need to move from this place for now.

Leonel's mind ran wild for a moment. What was the best use of his time?

After a while, Leonel made a decision.

He walked to the odd table and took out two ores, a pair of gloves, a quill, and finally, the Metal Spirit.

"How do I make this little guy my official Familiar?"



